

THE SENTINEL



OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

Leadership in the Cockpit

The flight crew was returning to base after a night proficiency flight. The crew was completing a training flight in preparation for the student's CAP Form 5 check ride with an instrument approach to a full stop which would require a long taxi back.

Two issues related to operating out of many small fields are lack of well-defined taxi lines and limited airfield lighting. These issues have been long identified as hazards to night operations at these fields and need to be mitigated in part by thorough briefings for night operations.

The student shot the instrument approach down to about 200 feet AGL, came out from under the hood and landed. He then slowed the aircraft to a safe taxi speed in preparation to taxi clear of the runway. The student momentarily looked down into the cockpit. He then shifted his scan outside to make sure the aircraft was clear of any hazards.

As he began to turn from the active runway onto what appeared to be the taxiway, the instructor determined they were about to taxi onto the grass just short of the inactive runway.

He called, "Stop!" over the intercom, and immediately took the controls and stopped the aircraft, using full braking. The student then took back the controls, corrected the aircraft's position, and continued to taxi to the parking area. The instructor's keen situational awareness and quick corrective action prevented an unsafe situation from developing into a possible mishap.

Every time a pilot flies, a natural skill set is taken along, but that skill set is refined and added to as the events in the flight teach the pilot. Some flights exert far more influence on a pilot's development than his/her given nature or gradually acquired skills. I am sure that this flight influenced both the instructor and student in that way. We all banter about the answer to the question, "What is the most important Cockpit Resource Management (CRM) skill?" To me, there is only one CRM skill, and all others help to describe it: leadership. Without an



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effective leader on that flight, an excited pilot who thought he was error-immune might have snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. The instructor kept the student from acting impulsively, but he did it without marginalizing anyone's efforts toward the goal.

I call that flight a pivotal point in both pilots' flying careers, because those lessons learned regularly will aid them, even six months later, to develop into more competent pilots. All instructors and pilots should ask themselves, am I acting as a leader on the flight, or just sitting the farthest forward. Am I making choices, or are things simply happening to me? These questions matter. Flight school and several hundred hours of flying time had not managed to get that message through to the student. It took an instrument approach one dark night to do that.

Col Lyle E. Letteer, CAP
National Safety Officer

Doggie Door Hazards

Doggie doors are small openings in doors or walls that are either hinged, spring operated or just a piece of flexible plastic or vinyl in a frame to allow dogs or cats to leave or enter the room as they please. Small children can pass through them too.

There have been many instances of children drowning because they exited the house through the doggie door and fell into the pool. If you have a pool that is fenced off from your house, make sure the fence is locked at all times when a capable swimmer is not present. This will protect your family as well as young neighbors that might venture in.

Other areas of danger for children leaving the house without anyone's knowledge using a doggie door are waking into a busy street, wandering off into the woods and falling from objects they have climbed on.

If you have a doggie door and small children in your house, be aware of where they are at all times. Consider an electronic doggie door that will only open when your pet approaches wearing a special radio transmitter device on their collar. This will also keep the neighbor's dogs from coming into your home. Install an alarm that will sound every time the door opens. You can also slide the door stop over the door when you know your pets will not need to go out. Be sure to secure it because older children will figure out a way to remove it.

Lt Col Brenda Allison, CAP
Asst National Safety Officer

Bike Helmets – Wear It

Warm weather presents opportunities for cadets and senior members and their families to enjoy outside activities. Bike riding is a fun and affordable way to explore your neighborhood, nearest park or a favorite vacation spot. Don't let an injury spoil your summer fun. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 500,000 people (41 % are 16 years of age and older) are treated in emergency rooms from bike related injuries; more than 700 die.

Head injuries are the most serious type of injury and the most common cause of death. Wearing a bicycle helmet is one of the best ways to protect your head if you fall. Helmets come in various sizes and it is imperative that it fits properly. Your straps should always be fastened, even if you are only riding for a short distance. The helmet should:

- Have a sticker that says it meets standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)
- Fit snugly, bicycle shops can help you measure for the correct size
- Come with sizing pads or a universal fit ring that helps you securely fit it to your head
- Sit level on your head and low on your forehead and should not rock back more than two fingers above the eyebrows or rock forward into your eyes
- Have the left buckle centered under your chin
- Have adjustable side straps that adjust to form a V shape under and slightly in front of the ears
- Have a chin strap that is snug enough that no more than two fingers can fit under it
- Be your only head gear, never wear a hat under your helmet
- Fit now, not be one that you will grow into
- Not be damaged, replace if it has been involved in a crash

Many states require bicycle helmets to be worn. Check you state's law at

<http://www.helmets.org/mandator.htm>

More details on how to properly fit a bicycle helmet are available at

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/EasyStepsWeb/>

Lt Col Brenda Allison, CAP
Asst National Safety Officer

Inanimate Objects Do Not Move When the Back-up Alarms Sound

All CAP vehicles (except sedans) are equipped with back-up alarms that sound when the transmission is in reverse. CAP members are aware of this feature and are conscious to move out of the way when the alarm sounds. "Things" do not.

Recently CAP vans have backed into motorcycles and personal vehicles. Before you operate a CAP vehicle in reverse, walk around it and check for objects and ditches. If a hazard is close to your vehicle, get a passenger to be the spotter for you. If you are the lone occupant, ask another person close by to watch as you maneuver away from the hazard. For an extra measure of safety in case a last-minute hazard appears, always use a spotter when you drive a van in reverse.

Lt Col Brenda Allison, CAP
Asst National Safety Officer

Vandalism Reports

CAP vans have been the target of vandalism with break-ins resulting in vehicle damage. Before you leave your van for any length of time, have all passengers stow their objects out of sight either under the seat or in an enclosed container in the back. Cover or disguise installed radios. These can be considered as an object for a quick buck on the black market. Phones, laptops, GPS units and their chargers are a favorite target for thieves. Never leave personal information like driver's license, credit cards, social security card or papers that list important numbers and information in a vehicle. This becomes an easy avenue for identity thief.

If you must leave the van unattended, look to park it in a high visibility area. A vehicle in a secluded area is an easy target. If the van will be parked overnight, park in a well lit area like under a street light or close to a parking lot security light. Most of all, remember to lock the vehicle. A local police jurisdiction in Metro Atlanta reports that 73% of break-ins this year have involved cars that were left unlocked. It only takes a few seconds for someone to open a door and grab an item.

Lt Col Brenda Allison, CAP
Asst National Safety Officer

Summary of Form 78 Accidents and Incidents for April 2009

Aircraft

Crosswind landing aircraft departed runway
Tire failure on landing
Tail wheel shimmy on landing departed runway
Tire blew while taxiing off runway
Tie down ring contacted runway on takeoff
Unknown hangar rash, possible wing of larger aircraft collided
Landed long and hit fence

Vehicle

Nothing listed

Bodily Injury

Cadet broke collarbone playing a game
Cadet slipped on floor striking chin received stitches
Cadet jumping fence fractured elbow